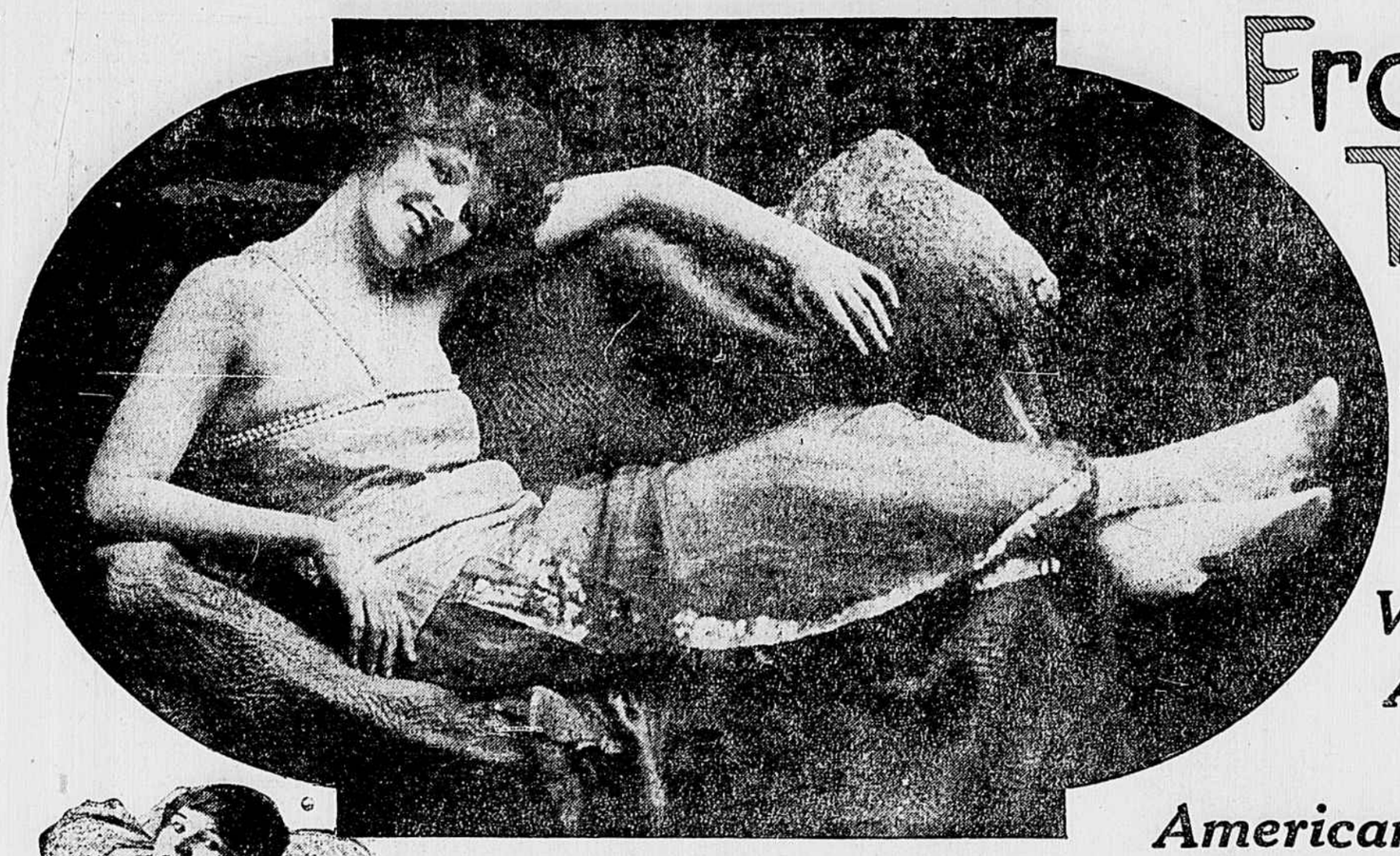

From Typewriter To Pet of the Artists Studios

Very Unusual Achievement of an American Girl Who Leaped from the Drudgery of an Office Stenographer to Queen of Bohemia in a Night

Miss Kay Laurell in the Costume She Wore at the Artists' Play Night and in Which She Leaped to Fame.

KAY LAURELL is the present reigning Queen of New York's Bohemia. Artists and sculptors vie with each other to reproduce her face and figure. She appears in the magazine illustrations and in the new Salon pictures—also on butchers' calendars, soap ads. and so on. And a sculptor of international reputation calls her up at least three times a week to ask her to marry him.

About this time a year ago Miss Laurell was a stenographer, plodding away in an unromantic office. She did not know what gifts she had. And then, in one night, she discovered them, four hundred and fifty of New York's greatest artists discovered them also and simultaneously, and, lo and behold!—Miss Laurell was discovered!

New York is, of course, a city of opportunity, and Broadway is the Lane of Promise—emphatically one of promise, because it usually does not get any further than that. New York is the modern Bagdad, the city of the Arabian Nights, with a thousand Caliphs Haroun wandering about disguised to shower blessings on the worthy. In all the romances of New York there is none more interesting or piquant than that which converted delectable little Miss Laurell from a stenographer to the pet of the artists of New York in a night.

One would think of a Queen of Bohemia as having been born in Paris or Vienna, or New York itself, or San Francisco, or cities of the kind. Miss Laurell was not—she was born in Erie, Pa., of honest but not too rich parents.

They named her Ruth.

In her early teens Miss Ruth began to visualize. "I must be a great success," she said. "I must go to New York to be recognized. But what have I that deserves recognition?" She could not answer because she did not know. "Never mind," she said to herself, happily; "some time I'll find out."

So she busied herself watching the telephone girls working at the switchboard. At night she would go over the motions she had seen during the day and even rigged up a little dummy board to practise on. At last she went to the head of the exchange and asked for a position.

"Have you had any experience?" asked the manager.

"Oh, yes," said Miss Laurell, then just getting out of her sixteenth year. So they put her on the switch, and as she seemed to know just what to do, they left her there.

"Ah," said Miss Laurell to herself that night. "In six years I will have saved enough to go to New York and by that time I will surely have discovered my talent."

But, alas! what was splendid in theory didn't work out in practise. Miss Laurell's spirit was all right, but her fingers weren't tough enough. She had wanted to do things too much in a hurry and hadn't given them time to callous. The plug cords which she shot into place began to cut them. The hands began to swell. She went pluckily on until one day the telephone people had to carry her out to a hospital. She had gotten blood poisoning from the little cords and she had to give up the telephone.

"Can you work on the typewriter?" asked one of the doctors. Miss Laurell had never worked on one in her life, but that didn't matter.

"Of course," she said.

"All right; when your hand is well I'll employ you as my stenographer,' said he.

Miss Laurell noted the make of typewriter he used and made a note of the salary—a much nearer New York one than the telephone people had given her.

After that, every night, Miss Laurell went secretly to a business college and learned to typewrite on just that kind of machine with her left hand. She figured that if she could learn with the left she'd have no trouble in picking up the thing with the right in quick time. That is just what happened. So she got that job.

"I'm sure it's not typewriting that I'm to be a genius at, though," she sighed. "No, it's something else. Now, what is it?"

The conduct of one of the doctor's friends ought to have given her the clue. He would sit and look at her for hours. Then he proposed marriage to her. At last he proposed so violently that Miss Laurell left the office by the window. She wouldn't come back. But she did get another position—she had learned stenography, too, by that time.

And still she was dissatisfied. "I know there is something that I can do better than all this," she said. "Let's see—have I carfare to New York and enough to live on for a time?" She counted. Yes, she had. "Perhaps," she mused, "I can discover myself there." She went to New York.

Almost at once she met Mr. Charles Falls, the famous illustrator. The Illustrators' Society, of which the disinguished Charles Dana Gibson is the president, was about to have one of its charming but unconventional affairs. Mr. Falls had written an exquisite little pantomime. He called it "Perfectly Happy." Its theme and treatment were strongly Oriental.

"Alas!" sighed Mr. Falls. "I am not happy."

"Why not?" asked Miss Kay—yes, she had dropped the Ruth en route to New York.

"I want some one to pose as my heroine, the Philandering Queen, and I cannot get her," mourned Mr. Falls.

"Will I do?" asked Miss Kay. Mr. Falls looked at her with an awakening eye.

"Not that way," he said. "Wait, I'll show you." He brought out a costume. It was a beautiful costume, but the most solid, material part of it was a rope of pearls. "You see," he explained, "you are supposed to be an Oriental Queen in the privacy of your boudoir."

Miss Kay gasped. "All right," she said at last. "I'll play it."

On the night that the illustrators held their affair the greatest artists and sculptors in America were there to see and to enjoy. The curtain rolled up on Mr. Falls's little pantomime. It also rolled up, somewhat hesitantly, it must be admitted, because it was a proper, conservative Berkeley Lyceum curtain, that was used to rolling up only on Chautauqua speakers and Y. M. C. A. affairs—it rolled up almost protestingly on Miss Kay.

There was a gasp of admiration from the audience, all of them trained to know and to appreciate perfect lines. "Who is she?" "Where did she come from?" "Has she ever posed?" ran through the house.

A new star had blazed out in Bohemia. Miss Kay Laurell was discovered. Before she could get away she knew she had also discovered herself. The artists and sculptors clustered about her offering her engagements to pose for them.

So she posed. And posed, and posed, and posed. Soon the theatrical managers were after her to pose for larger audiences. She was, in fact, discovered indeed.

Gibson, Harrison Fisher, Orson Lowell, Prince Troubetskoi, Stanlaws, Hamilton King, Gilbert, Foster—all the great names in America's roster of art—found inspiration in her.

A year ago she was making $15 a week—to-day she is making twenty times that.

All of which simply goes to show that one's light won't always be hidden under a bushel if one is really earnest and sincere in desiring it to shine out to all.

And that even if one doesn't know just what one's genius is, if we try hard enough some one is sure to come along who knows enough to tell us. And also that New York is still the only city where the Arabian Nights are still working strong and well.

Miss Laurell Posing as the "Soul of France," Singing the "Marseillaise."

The Charming Profile of Miss Laurell (and Above), Kay Laurell in an Impressive Gown for a Black and White Illustration.

How the Moon Makes Chickens Hatch and Lay

By JOHN T. TIMMONS,
(The Distinguished Horticulturist.)

IT is an acknowledged fact that the moon produces the tide which sweeps the seas, and it is claimed by scientists that the moon sends a tidal wave round the world, through the land as well as the sea.

If such is true it is not difficult to believe some other things we are hearing about the extraordinary influence of that great lunar body, which, if dead in itself, certainly is imparting life and vigor to many forms of earthly life.

Many truckers plant their melons and onions in the right sign of the moon simply because experience has taught them that different plantings produce different results, and careful study has shown there is a right time in the moon's phases to plant certain crops to secure the best results. Many of the old-time farmers who split rails and shingles from the sturdy oaks which were felled to clear the lands for crops would not lay a fence row or drive a roof unless it was done at what they considered the proper time of moon to produce the best results.

Actual tests have shown shingles placed on a roof in the light of the moon will curl up and not last half as long as those put on in the dark of the moon, and fence rails laid in the light of the moon will stand up out of the earth, while those laid during the dark of the moon will sink into the earth to the depth of several inches.

These and many other very interesting lay experiments have led the writer to conduct some interesting experiments in the hatching of young chicks, and what he has proven to be true may be of considerable value to many who are interested in poultry raising for pleasure and profit.

It requires an average of twenty-one days for eggs to hatch. Once in a while persons have noticed that a hen will bring out chicks in one or two days less time. This has been credited to the manner in which the hen brooded and to the weather and numerous other causes, but the real fact is it is due to the influence of the moon. Eggs placed beneath a hen during the light of the moon will make a poor hatch, and a smaller percentage of the chicks hatched will be raised.

The proper time to set a hen is when the moon is new, or very close to that period, so that the moon will be full just about a week before the time for hatching arrives.

Experiments have shown that more eggs will hatch if set at this time. It has been claimed fertile eggs will hatch no matter when they are set. Many eggs are fertile and yet the life germ is weak, perhaps due to some condition of the fowls, and if it is set at the wrong time it will be apt to die, but if set at the correct time it will grow in strength, and instead of being a half formed chick in the shell, there will be a strong, vigorous chick, which will thrive and produce a healthier and much more rapid growing chicken than it would had it lived and been hatched during another period of the moon's phases.

Chicks hatched about a week after the moon is full will grow much more rapidly than others, and it is surprising how rapid their feathers will grow and how vigorous and thrifty they will be and how much easier it will be to feed them, as they seem to be born with energy enough to forage and seek for much of their food in the form of insects and certain forms of vegetation.

Chicks hatched in the dark of the moon will not grow rapidly, and, strange as it may seem, will not make strong, vigorous fowls. They seem to lack the natural instinct to search for food, and become lazy, unproductive fowls, failing to produce eggs in anything like the quantity laid by hens which were light-of-the-moon chicks.